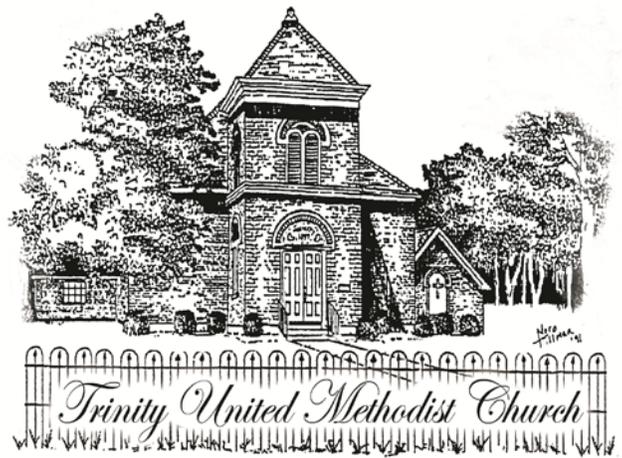




Trinity United Methodist Church Newsletter



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I Believe that, In the Name of Jesus Christ, You Are Forgiven

⁷ Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. ⁸ But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.
Romans 5:7-8 NRSV

Liturgy literally means what is said in public worship. For our worship services it encompasses the call to worship, the passing of the peace, hymns and anthems, the sermon, prayers and even the joys and concerns offered up from the congregation. However, there are some liturgies that do not change from week to week and I want to focus for a bit on two of those: the Apostles Creed and the granting of pardon following the prayer of confession.

The Historic Creeds of the Christian Church, the Nicene Creed and the Apostles Creed, were originally formulated to encompass what the church leaders of the day believed to be the essentials of the faith. Because we are so far removed from the forces that encouraged the articulation of these creeds we have forgotten what they were meant to express. Yet I believe that there is benefit in understanding why these particular formulations were composed.

Apostles Creed:

I believe in God the Father, maker of heaven and earth... Along with Judaism and Islam, Christians confess that there is but one God who created the universe.

And in Jesus Christ, his only son our Lord... Jesus Christ is the one and only son of God who is also our Lord by Confession and in fact.

Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; One of the most powerful early heresies of the church was Gnosticism. Gnosticism proclaimed that spirit was good and that flesh was corrupt; that our spirits were trapped in corrupted flesh and Christ came to earth to impart the secret knowledge, *Gnosis*, to allow us to free our spirits from their fleshly prisons. Since flesh was corrupt Gnosticism taught that there was no incarnation. Gnosticism proclaimed that Christ only appeared human because God would never submit to being corrupt flesh. Since Jesus was never alive he could not be killed and was never really subjected to earthly powers. The “resurrection”

was asserted to be nothing more than the manifestation of God's spirit from the shell created to make him appear human. In one Gnostic text Christ is featured sitting on a nearby hillside and mocking the crucifixion of his "shell."

The Apostles and Nicene Creeds deal with the heresy of Gnosticism. They proclaim that Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit of God but was born of the human woman Mary. Thus, Christ was both Human and Divine. As a human, he was subjected to the authority of Rome in the personage of Pontius Pilate, sentenced to death through crucifixion, a common form of Roman punishment, did indeed die and was, in fact, buried. In this brief sentence the Church Fathers proclaimed the incarnation, the human and divine nature of Christ and denied every claim of Gnosticism.

On the third day he arose from the dead, ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; and thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. Having been a human being who died a human death, Christ was raised from the dead and ascended into heaven, returning to the God Head. In the fullness of time, Christ will return and judge the world and its people. The "quick" refers to living persons.

***I believe in the Holy Spirit,
The Holy Catholic Church,
The Communion of Saints,
The forgiveness of sins,
The resurrection of the body, and
The life everlasting.***

With the first statement, the Church has completed affirming the Trinity: God, the Son and Holy Spirit. The Nicene Creed goes on to describe the relationship of the Son to God and the Holy Spirit to God and Christ, matters that involved the split between the Eastern and Western church.

The Holy Catholic Church is understood, by Protestants, to be all persons who confess Christ as Lord and Savior, sometimes referred to as the Church Universal, although it originally referred to the Catholic Church.

The Communion of Saints refers to the Christian belief, preserved in Psalm 139 and elsewhere, that we are never outside of the presence of God in life or death. We continue to share our lives not only with our living brothers and sisters, but with those who have gone before. These deceased members of the body of Christ are believed to pray for us and to support us in our ministry.

The forgiveness of sins refers to the forgiveness available through the sacrifice of Christ. It is also a reaffirmation of our human nature. Flesh can exist without being corrupt through the power of God.

The resurrection of the body is not dependent upon having an unmarked body at the time we die, but is an affirmation that we remain ourselves, distinct persons, when resurrected. Paul's words from 1 Corinthians might be helpful in understanding what is meant by resurrection of the Body:

³⁵ *But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?"* ³⁶ *Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies.* ³⁷ *And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but*

a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. ³⁸ *But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body.* ³⁹ *Not all flesh is alike, but there is one flesh for human beings, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish.* ⁴⁰ *There are both heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one thing, and that of the earthly is another.* ⁴¹ *There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; indeed, star differs from star in glory.*

⁴² *So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable.* ⁴³ *It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power.* ⁴⁴ *It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body.* 1 Corinthians 15:35-44
NRSV

Paul believed that it was a mistake to equate the resurrected body with the earthly body. We could not, as persons with physical bodies, understand what our resurrected bodies would be like.

The life everlasting is the eternal life in Christ that begins when we accept Christ as Lord and Savior and continues throughout our lives and ever after.

Each week when we use the Apostles Creed, we affirm all the essential beliefs of the Christian faith before God and one another. As I occasionally point out, speaking these words in public can lead to arrest and persecution in a number of countries in the world. They should never be spoken without conscious thought about their meaning.

The Pardon

The Pardon is a concept that troubles some people. In form it seems that I am somehow, as an agent of the church, conveying God's pardon to you and then you to me. Indeed, based on scripture from the Gospel of John that is how the concept was understood for centuries:

²³ *If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."* John 20:23

The Catholic Church, at one time, did indeed presume to withhold God's pardon as a means of control. The Protestant Church finds the theology of the Romans passage cited at the beginning of this article to be more persuasive. Christ died for the sins of all persons while we were still sinners and that pardon is available to all who accept it through the sacrifice of Christ. The liturgy that we follow proclaiming the pardon might be more appropriately thought of as the headline of a newspaper than a judgment contained in a judicial decree. I declare to you, who have confessed your sin and your faith, that your sins are forgiven because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. You make the same declaration to me. It is much like declaring that the sun rises in the morning and sets at night. It is not something that any of us controls, but simply a statement of fact. Indeed, this declaration is a succinct statement of the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus Christ: ***In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.***

Rev. Will Wells Is the Newly Appointed Pastor for Trinity UMC

Stacy Bell, the Chairperson of the Staff Parish Relations Committee, announced on Sunday April 10th that Rev. Will Wells has been appointed as the next pastor of Trinity UMC. Rev. Wells is currently serving Fayetteville First United Methodist. His wife, Pamela, is also a United Methodist pastor and will take over as pastor to College Grove UMC in June. They will live in the parsonage at College Grove. Moving day for Tennessee Conference pastors is June 20th and Rev. Well's first Sunday will be July 2nd.

Volunteer Opportunities

- VBS director. It's not too soon to start planning. The director will get to choose the VBS theme and date.
- Nursery level (pre-K) lesson plans coordinator. We have approximately 100 lessons and related crafts ready to use currently. Coordinator will need to refresh these periodically and be able to show others the set up.
- Wardrobe supervisor for the Christmas pageant. We have 70-80 costumes currently and have fabrics, patterns, etc. for several more. This role is about getting the costumes ready for the pageant as well as helping participants get "suited up".

Thursday Morning Bible Study

The Thursday Morning Bible Study Group meets weekly on Thursdays from 10:00 to 11:30 AM. We have room for you! We are currently studying 1 Samuel. The last bible study before the Summer Break will be June 15th.

Prayer Ministry

The following persons are part of the prayer ministry at Trinity UMC:

| | | |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Elva Beard | Rachel Newman | Sam Richardson |
| Larry Eastwood | Kenneth Stevens | Judy Richardson |
| Leslie Eastwood | Patricia Stevens | Charles Wilson |

The members of the prayer ministry of Trinity United Methodist church covenant with one another to pray daily for:

- Those concerns on the prayer list of the Church and for healing of body and spirit for all persons listed;
- For each ministry of the church that each ministry would work to bring the Gospel to those within our community and most especially to bring the Gospel to those who have not yet accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior;
- For all the members of the Trinity UMC community that they be led and enabled to live as the Body of Christ;

- For our local community and all its needs, especially for those who are struggling with the burden of poverty;
- For our nation and our world that God help lead the people of the world to live in peace with God's Kingdom.

If you would like to be a part of this ministry (or if you have already spoken to me about it and were inadvertently left off the list) please let me know and I will see that you are added.

Up-Coming Sermons

June 4, 2017: Sermon: In My Father's House... Wherever I've served over the last 19 years I've always offered to preach on scriptures that were of interest or concern to members of the congregation. However, very few people have taken me up on that offer. As I approach my last few Sundays here at Trinity I'm pleased to be able to offer a sermon on a requested scripture passage, John 14:2: *In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?* This is also Pentecost. My texts are Acts 2:1-21 and John 14:1-14.

June 11, 2017: Sermon: Whose Gospel? We are charged to share God's Gospel, the Good News. But too many Christians seem intent on re-writing the Gospel to suit themselves. The Gospel is Gods. My texts are 2 Corinthians 13:11-13 and Matthew 28:16-20.

Worship Leaders Schedule

June 4

Marty Bauguess, **Liturgist**

Dorise and Bill LeCates, **Greeters**

Jan and Stacy Bell, **Ushers**

June 11

Gina Stewart, **Liturgist**

Marty and Dana Bauguess, **Greeters**

Hal and Rachel Newman, **Ushers**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We will be serving food to the congregants at **61st UMC**. The remaining date for providing and serving food is **June 17**. Sixty-First Ave. UMC will be closing in late June. This is a wonderful opportunity for serving others. Please make **Charles Wilson** aware if you are able to serve.

GraceWorks has a shortage on many items in our food pantry, and we need your help restocking it! Here is a list of some very critical items needed in our food pantry: **Critical Needs:** Canned green vegetables (not green beans), Canned beans, Canned meat (not tuna), Cereal, Hamburger Helper type boxed meals, Soup. Please support this important ministry with your regular donations. The box is located beside the side door.

The Nanette Crowell Companions in Christ Sunday School Class: We enjoy fellowship beginning at 9:45 with our study beginning at 10:00. All are welcome to join us as we pursue Biblical truths and the application for our lives.

Birthdays in June

Lynn McGill, Jo Cotton, Richard Stevens, Nancy Conway, Kenneth Stevens, Larry Eastwood

Happy Birthday to each of you!